

DISPENSARY WORK IN NERVOUS DISEASES.¹

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From the first day of January, 1904, to December 31 of the same year, 1,981 new patients were entered on the books of the Department of Nervous Diseases in the Vanderbilt Clinic. Some 2,138 patients applied as suffering from nervous disorders, but of these only the number mentioned were considered suitable for examination.

The total number of patients in the entire clinic may be briefly stated as follows:

DEPARTMENTS	NEW PATIENTS.
Nervous	2,138
Orthopedic	975
Surgical	4,470
Medical	13,358
Children	3,430
Gynecological	2,684
Eye	4,326
Ear	1,519
Nose and Throat	4,117
Skin	3,642
Genito-Urinary	2,356
Total	42,995

From a brief glance it may be seen that the general incidence of nervous diseases to the clinical population is about as it has been in years past, approximating five per cent.

The total number of visits last year in the nervous department, 9,722, was less than the year previous. The extremely severe late winter of 1903-1904, and the early and equally severe winter of 1904-1905 may in part account for this, as many of the patients suffering from organic spinal affections have found it extremely trying to attend the clinic regularly.

The personnel of the clinic remained much the same as during the year 1904.

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¹ Report of Clinic of Prof. M. Allen Starr for the year 1904.

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After examination of the 1,981 patients it was found that no organic or functional disorder of the nervous system could be found in 46 women and 94 men, while for 24 women and 24 men the diagnosis of the disease could not be determined with sufficient accuracy to be entered as a diagnosis on the history records.

This leaves a total of 1,790 patients concerning whom statistical information is herewith presented. Of these 879 were male and 911 female.

MENTAL DISEASE.—As in previous reports for 1902 and 1903 the statistics show that mental troubles represented about ten per cent of the cases coming under observation, the women preponderating, 137 compared with 78 men.

Mental defectives were 68 in number, 3.8 per cent; distributed as follows: Idiocy 9, boys 1, girls 8; Imbecility, 59, boys 8, girls 51.

The disparity in the number of imbeciles of the sexes is to be interpreted as purely accidental, although Mayo-Smith says in his *Statistics and Sociology* that in England there is an excess of males. He includes the figures of adult idiots of all classes, whereas in this clinic children only are concerned.

With reference to the Insanities the stand taken last year in our report may again be stated. It is believed that a thoroughly good diagnosis of many of the insanities cannot be made by a single examination at a clinic of the general type of the Vanderbilt Clinic particularly since in many instances dependance must be placed entirely upon the history offered by the patients themselves. Thus the diagnosis must be accepted in the most general sense, a convenient classification based upon the ascertainable and frequently defective history.

Of the adolescent insanities Dementia Præcox was diagnosed in 12, 6 men and 6 women; they were for the most part examples of the purely hebephrenic grouping. Katatonic rigidity was present in one of the patients.

Simple hypochondriasis or depression of sufficiently deep grade to merit the classification Melancholia was found in 31 patients, 15 men and 16 women.

Manic-depressive insanity was diagnosed in four instances, 2 men, 2 women. In all of these regular cycles had occurred. Secondary and senile dementias were present in five patients.

General Paresis was diagnosed in 26 patients. Four of these were women. The total number is the same as for last year but there were no women on the list for 1903. There were 434 patients suffering from this disease admitted to the New York State Hospitals during the year, or 7.7 per cent of the entire number of the insane admissions in the hospitals for the insane of the State.

Paranoid states, allied more closely to Paranoia itself than to other syndrome groupings were present in 6, 4 men and 2 women.

Minor Psychoneuroses were not uncommon. We have preferred to group these borderland cases thus: Morbid fears, 3; Menstrual Psychoses of mild grade, 32; Occupation Psychoneuroses, 11; Sexual Perversions, 1; and Neurotic, unmanageable children with bad dreams, 4.

NERVOUS DISEASES.—Sensory-motor Neuroses represent the greater number of affections in the clinic population. Thus in 1904 there were 326 patients suffering from Neurasthenia and 77 from Hysteria.

Of the neurasthenics, so-called, 194 were men and 132 women. Seventy-five per cent of the men were Russian Hebrews. The type of neurasthenics here represented are for the most part purely mental cases. Laziness, indifference, weakness of mind, and supersensitiveness characterize them all. They are for the most part ill because of lack of moral courage, and being temporarily out of work, the great majority come to get some medicine and are rarely heard of a second time. They are a very unsatisfactory kind of patient to have to treat.

Hysteria, or the hysterical temperament, was diagnosed in 77 patients, 8 males and 69 females. Only a few of these women presented the more severe grades of the affection. We cannot help but feel that major hysteria is a comparatively rare affection with our native population. The major hysterics seen are almost invariably in patients of foreign birth or the descendants of recent arrivals. It might be said, however, that the particular type of clientele of the Vanderbilt Clinic is drawn from a social stratum in which hystericals are less apt to be numerous.

The Motor Neuroses were represented as follows: Epilepsy, 173, 90 males and 83 females; no unusual features were brought out in the histories of the epileptics seen in 1904.

The general feeling that Sydenham's Chorea has been more than usually prevalent during the year is confirmed by this year's study. There were 221 patients, 85 males and 136 females this year, a total incidence of 12 per cent of the entire nervous population. Assuming the dispensary-seeking population of the State of New York for 1904 to be 1,000,000—it was 932,587 in 1900, according to the reports of the State Commissioners of Charities, and assuming a similar proportion to exist in other dispensaries in the State, there would be 6,000 children who suffered from chorea in New York State during 1904. The great majority of the children suffering from chorea are between the ages of 5 and 14 years. In New York State there were, according to the census of 1900, 1,357,510 children between the ages of 5 and 14 years. Thus, judged by crude statistical inquiry, one child in about every 200 of the population suffers from this disease.

One patient with what was thought to be Friedreich's Paramyoclonus Multiplex was admitted for treatment, a boy of about 10 years of age. Habit spasms were present in seven girls; spasmodic Wry Neck in 2; miscellaneous forms of Tic in 6, and Stammering in 28—10 males and 18 females.

Paralysis Agitans occurred in 16, 10 men and 6 women. Nothing unusual was encountered in the histories of these patients.

LESIONS OF PERIPHERAL NERVES.—The total number of sufferers from peripheral nerve injuries of one type or another was 323, males 180 and females 143.

Neuralgia was diagnosed as follows:

	MEN	WOMEN
Generalized and non-localized	4	15
Occipital	1	1
Supraorbital	4	11
Trigeminal	10	18
Facial, including dental	9	10
Brachial	1	3
Intercostal		2
Sciatic	24	5

Following the clinic usage of separating the neuralgias from the neuritides, the following figures were obtained:

	MALE	FEMALE
Neuritis, not localized by observer	12	7
Alcoholic neuritis	13	
Alcohol and pressure (Saturday night neuritis)	6	1
Auditory	1	
Lead neuritis	8	
Mercurial neuritis	1	
Typhoid (post-infectious neuritis)		1
Diphtheritic (post-infectious neuritis)	1	2
Malarial (post-infectious neuritis)		3
Measles (post-infectious neuritis)		2
Rheumatic (post-infectious neuritis)	3	1
Traumatic	6	6
Optic	1	

Peripheral palsies were present in almost double the number seen in 1903, 123 in all, 68 males and 55 females. The distribution was as follows: Facial paralysis (Bell's palsy) 46 men, 23 women. Exposure is the almost universal history. In a few, trauma has been the cause, and in others, middle ear disease.

Paralysis of the ocular muscles was observed in one man, and paralysis of the vocal cords in one man and in one woman.

Involvement of the musculo-spiral, next to the facial, is observed in the greater number of patients, 21 men and 4 women showing typical pressure symptoms. Erb's palsy was diagnosed in 14 children. Brachial and nerve palsy was present in 12 men and

7 women. Other isolated paralyses were: Circumflex, 4 men; Ulnar, 2 men; Median, 1 man; Anterior tibial, 1 male, 1 female; Serratus, 1 male, 1 female.

SPINAL CORD AFFECTIONS.—The Anterior Poliomyelitis syndrome was observed in 33 patients. Of these 28 were acute and 5 chronic in character. Typical Anterior Poliomyelitis of children occurred in 19 boys and 9 girls. The chronic types were in adults, 4 men and 1 woman. No instance of high anterior poliomyelitis, bulbar or other involvement was seen during the year.

Diffuse Myelitis was observed in one male only.

Multiple Sclerosis was observed in 9 patients, 4 women and 5 men. The diagnosis is uncertain in two of the cases, a cord tumor being suspected in one.

The Posterior Scleroses have been observed in 24 instances. *Tabes Dorsalis* occurred in 23 of these, 18 men and 5 women. Defective development of the posterior columns, *Friedreich's Ataxia* in 1 girl. The comparative ratio of men to women suffering from *tabes* this year is high.

Lateral Sclerosis was diagnosed in 6 men; Spinal Tumor in 1 woman; *Syringomyelia* in 3 men and 2 women; Hemorrhage into the cord in 2 men. Two instances of *Fracture Paraplegia* were recorded, and one of *Paraplegia* due to *Potts' disease*, all in men.

BRAIN.—Organic affections of the brain were present in 111 patients.

The meninges were involved in 3, 1 man, 2 women. The types of lesion were thought to be *Chronic Pachymeningitis*.

Apoplexy was diagnosed in 51 patients, 38 men and 13 women. No attempt has been made to differentiate between hemorrhage, thrombosis and embolism. The vast majority of the hemiplegias, however, were hemorrhagic in origin. Infantile cerebral hemiplegia was diagnosed in 16 instances, 3 boys and 13 girls. Infantile diplegia was present in 3 girls.

Brain syphilis was suspected in 5 men and 1 woman, 6 in all. Two men suffered from brain tubercle. Two cerebral tumors and 2 cerebellar tumors were diagnosed. One patient with atrophy of the cerebellum was admitted. Cerebral arteriosclerosis was thought to be present in 24 patients, 17 males and 7 females. Concussion of the brain was diagnosed in 7 patients, 6 of whom were men.

TROPHONEUROSES.—*Exophthalmic goitre*, 4 men and 12 women, 16 in all; *Myxedema*, 1 man; *Meralgia Paresthetica*, 1 man; *Erythromelalgia*, 1 woman; *Raynaud's disease*, 1 woman.

MISCELLANY.—*Alcoholism*, 46 men, 1 woman; *Nicotinism*, 2 men; *Morphinism*, 1 man; *Headache*, 18 men, 49 women; *Chronic Hiccough*, 1; *Deaf Mutism*, 2 females; *Sleeplessness*, 3 men, 7 women; *Narcolepsy*, 1 man; *Pseudomuscular Hypertrophy*, 1 female; *Acroparesthesia*, 5 men, 12 women; *Sunstroke*, 1; *Joint Atrophy*, 1; *Tremor*, 1; *Coccyodynia*, 1; *Blepharospasm*, 1.